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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: AFTAERMATH OF THE PRESIDENTIAL RECALL
ATTEMPT

¶1. Summary: As the presidential recall attempt came to an end, Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies began to shift their focus June 29 to possible discord between President Chen Shui-bian (DPP) and former President Lee Teng-hui (Taiwan Solidarity Union) and between the KMT and the PFP, as well as on a speculated alliance between Lee and KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou. News coverage also focused on investigation into the alleged role of the First Family's personal physician in First Lady Wu Shu-chen's involvement in the Sogo Department Store gift certificates scandal, and the probe into the Presidential Office's special allowance expenditures; and the year-end Taipei-Kaohsiung mayoral races. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, carried the results of a latest DPP survey on page two, which showed that KMT Chairman Ma's approval rating has dropped a sharp 20 percent from 75 percent to 55 percent. The same poll also found that the KMT's approval rating also dropped from 40 percent to 25 percent, while the DPP's approval rating rose slightly to 17 percent.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "Liberty Times" editorial defined the so-called 'nativist line,' saying it is not linked to any certain individual or political party. The editorial said that any regime that identifies with the Taiwan-centered entity and is willing to carry out ideals such as reforms, incorruptibility, progress, and prosperity can be viewed as a nativist regime. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" urged President Chen to get down to business and work to regain the people's confidence in the integrity of his DPP administration and its ability to govern. An editorial in the pro-status quo "China Times" said the Green camp's corruption is not equal to the Blue camp's cleanliness, and this is the biggest trial facing Ma Ying-jeou. An editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" urged the opposition parties to return to a more moderate path in the wake of the Legislative Yuan's vote on the presidential recall motion. End summary.

A) "Nativist Line Is to Identify with Taiwan-Centered Entity - And to Carry out Ideals of Reform, Cleanliness, and Progress"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] editorialized (6/29):

"... What is the so-called nativist line? It contains several major concepts: democracy, reform, incorruptibility, progress, prosperity, a common destiny, and Taiwan-centered awareness. First, the reason to start a nativist line is because the totalitarian rule of foreign regimes over the past few centuries has awakened the Taiwan people's consciousness to become their own masters. ... As a result, to identify with the Taiwan-centered entity ranks as the top key point of a nativist line. But to ensure that the nativist line

will last forever, the move to consolidate and concentrate Taiwan-centered awareness alone is insufficient; more importantly, it is about presenting visions about democracy, reform, incorruptibility, progress, and prosperity. In other words, the ideal of a nativist line is not simply to pursue an independent sovereignty; it is more important to build a country of prosperity and justice, in which all the people can live under a happy, free and democratic system. ...

"... Having clarified the concept and meaning of the nativist line, the term 'nativist regime' will no longer be misleading and distorted. The term will no longer be linked or equal to any certain individual or political party. Any regime that identifies with the Taiwan-centered entity and is willing to carry out ideals such as reforms, incorruptibility, progress and prosperity can be viewed as a nativist regime, and any regime that violates what the nativist line and the people have entrusted to it is not regarded as a nativist regime. ..."

B) "Chen Must Get Back to Business"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (6/29):

"After surviving the opposition's attempt to oust him on Tuesday in the country's first-ever presidential recall vote, this is not the time for President Chen Shui-bian to sit back and relax. With less than two years left in office, Chen needs to get down to business and work to regain the people's confidence in the integrity of his Democratic Progressive Party administration and its ability to govern. ... True leadership shines through difficult times. Chen has the responsibility to live up to the public's expectations and focus on pushing ahead with effective policies that best serve the public and Taiwan's national interests. He should remember that the public has entrusted him with a precious honor - to go down in history as the head of the first pro-localization regime in Taiwan. The rest of his legacy is something that he has to work on now."

C) "A Look at Ma Ying-jeou's Predicament from Several Recent Events"

The pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] noted in an editorial (6/29):

"As expected, under the DPP's counterattacks, the presidential recall motion failed to pass in the Legislative Yuan. The Taiwan people will surely remember that DPP legislators tied their whole party to Chen Shui-bian's family, and the DPP may have to pay a price for this in the future. But the people's displeasure with the DPP is one thing, and whether they will turn their displeasure into support for the KMT and the PFP is something else.

"Many opinion polls showed that no matter how fiercely the scandals involving the First Family escalated, 20 to 30 percent of local people said they still support the DPP. Without a doubt, a minority of these nearly 30 percent of Taiwan people [do not support the pan-Blue camp] because of their narrow-minded nativist or ethnic consciousness, but still, most people also 'do not believe the KMT is clean anyway.' The many scandals surrounding the First Family and President Chen's close aides over the past few months more or less manifested the ruling party's 'corrupt' image. But the Green camp's corruption does not mean that the Blue camp is clean, and that explains why the Blue camp has yet to fulfill their hope to create a comparison between 'cleanliness and corruption.' Frankly speaking, this is the KMT's biggest problem and the biggest trial facing Ma Ying-jeou. ..."

D) "The Opposition Should Be Moderate in Action"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] wrote in an editorial (6/29):

"... Ma is said to have decided to take his party back to the 'middle road,' or a moderate course, after the recall attempt. Soong has expressed dissatisfaction with the plan, but, in our view, a moderate course will be in the best interests of the opposition. The campaign to oust Chen has had a negative impact on social stability. Although it won widespread support, it has triggered

some criticism among independent voters, who are normally annoyed by political strife. ... If Chen and his family are involved in more corruption cases and if the DPP continues to disappoint the people by failing to improve the residents' livelihoods, they will be the victims of their own actions in future elections. In a democracy, elections are the best way for the people to put an end to government corruption and to eliminate incompetent politicians."

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